



Highlights

This fact sheet is one of six that have been created to assist the public in the review of the draft quality of life performance standards developed to minimize the impacts of the Hudson River cleanup on local communities. It describes the primary components of the performance standard for potential noise from the project. Information on the performance standards for air quality, odor, lighting and navigation can be found in a general overview and in individual fact sheets on these topics, and in the Draft Quality of Life Performance Standards document, which is available for public review and comment.

The public comment period for the draft quality of life performance standards begins on December 19, 2003 and ends on February 17, 2004.

Background

The February 2002 Record of Decision (ROD) for the Hudson River PCBs Superfund site requires the development of performance standards that set specific goals and requirements for the project. The quality of life performance standards are intended to reduce the effects of the dredging; sediment processing, transferring and dewatering; and support operations on people, businesses, recreation, and community activities in the project area. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will review project design plans for consistency with the quality of life performance standards and will oversee cleanup activities to ensure that they are met.

Noise Standard

Many of the activities associated with the removal of PCB-contaminated sediments will have the potential to produce noise. The principal objective of the noise performance standard is to minimize the effects of noise from the project on the quality of life in the surrounding communities. The noise levels allowed under this performance standard are much lower than levels that would result in a health concern.

Project activities that have the potential to generate noise can be categorized as either long-term or short-term. Long-term activities are expected to continue for the duration of the six-year project and would include equipment operations at the sediment processing/transfer facilities and barge or railroad transfer of the processed materials. Short-term activi-

ties include construction of the sediment processing/transfer facilities, dredging, and backfilling. Short-term activities could vary from several weeks to several months in a particular area.

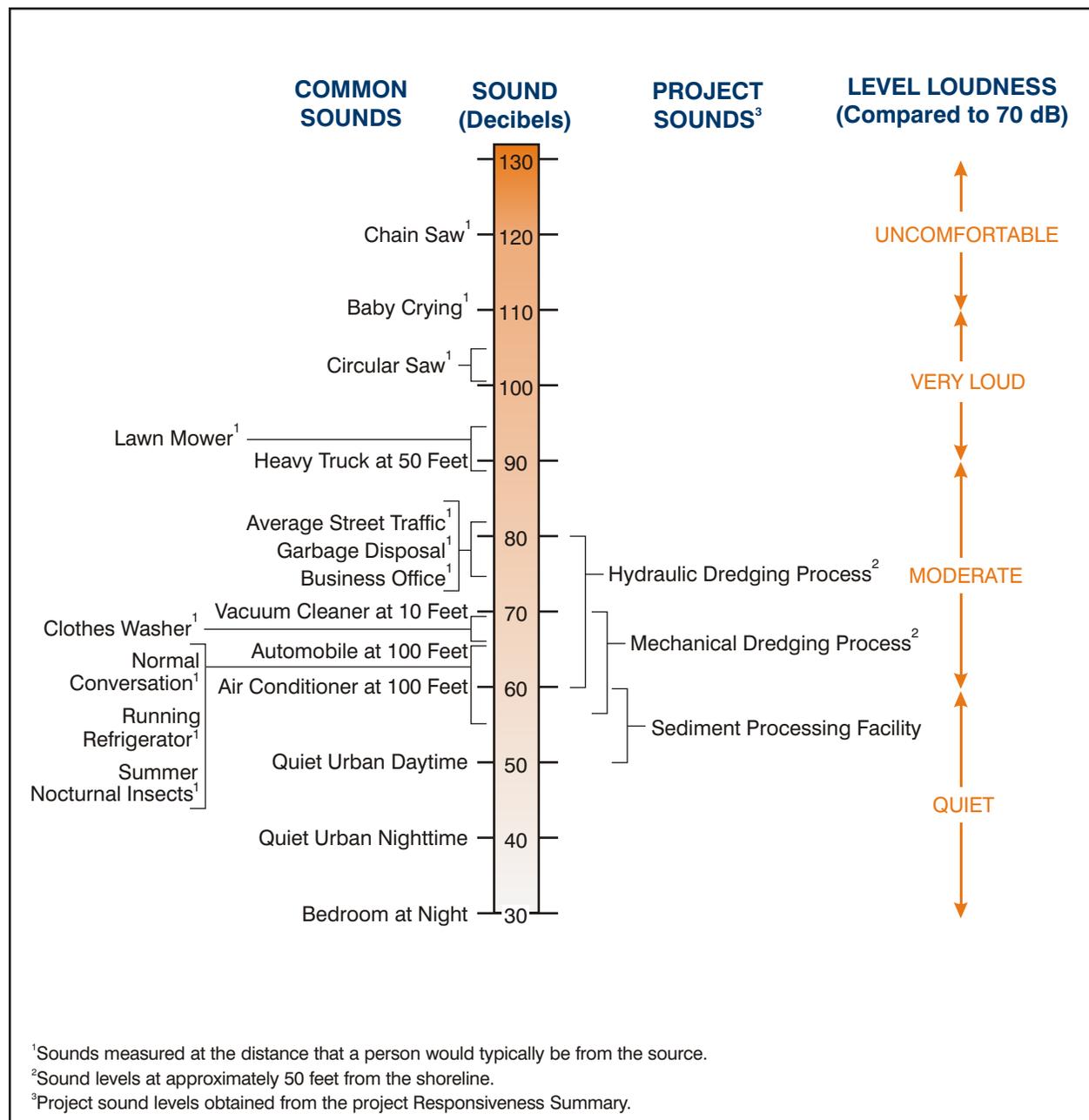
In developing performance standards for noise, EPA considered the effects of daytime and nighttime dredging and dewatering activities near residential areas. For example, a lower residential noise standard has been developed for nighttime hours. This lower standard will also apply to mixed commercial and residential areas.

The table below summarizes the noise performance standards.

Location	Performance Standard	Monitoring Frequency
<i>Short-term</i>		
Residential (nighttime)	65 decibels	Monitored for a full hour every four hours
Residential (daytime)	75 decibels (control level)* 80 decibels	
Commercial (daytime and nighttime)	80 decibels	
<i>Long-term</i>		
Residential (daytime and nighttime)	65 decibels	24-hour average noise level
Commercial (daytime and nighttime)	72 decibels	Monitored for a full hour every four hours

**Control level is the level at which measures are recommended instead of required.*

For comparison purposes, common sound levels and anticipated project sound levels are shown on the figure below:



Adapted from: Handbook of Noise Control, C.M. Harris, Editor, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1979, and FICAN 1992. © 2003 Ecology and Environment, Inc.

Comparison of Predicted Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site Noise Levels and Other Sources of Noise

Compliance with the Noise Standard

Compliance with the noise standard will be confirmed primarily by monitoring the source of the noise. Noise levels will be monitored using a sound level meter at the shoreline for dredging operations or at the site perimeter for facility operations. Monitoring may be done closer to residential areas or businesses when needed to further assess sound level effects.

Noise level monitoring will guide the actions required to comply with the standard during the cleanup:

- *If the noise standard is not exceeded, operations will continue as designed, with regular reporting to EPA.*
- *If the noise standard is exceeded and it can be easily and immediately controlled, or if a project-related complaint is received:*
 - the exceedance and/or complaint will be investigated,
 - appropriate steps will be taken to resolve the complaint and/or exceedance,
 - follow-up with the person who made the complaint will be conducted, and
 - follow-up reporting to EPA will be conducted.
- *If the noise exceedance cannot be easily or immediately controlled, or if frequent /recurrent complaints are received:*
 - the exceedance and/or complaint will be investigated,
 - additional monitoring will be performed as needed,
 - an action plan will be developed and implemented,
 - follow-up with the person who made the complaint will be conducted, and
 - EPA will be notified within 24 hours of discovery, and a detailed report will be prepared.



EPA will evaluate the methods and frequency of sampling and monitoring as the project proceeds and will consider any necessary changes when appropriate.

EPA will work with local officials and communities through various stakeholder groups, including the Community Advisory Group (CAG), to keep them up-to-date on compliance with the performance standard. EPA and/or personnel responsible for day-to-day operations will provide updates through verbal and/or written notifications and regularly scheduled stakeholder and CAG meetings.

Public Review

The Draft Quality of Life Performance Standards document is available at the information repositories located in Glens Falls, Ft. Edward (Hudson River Field Office), Ballston Spa, Albany, Poughkeepsie, and New York City (EPA Region 2 offices) and in Edgewater, New Jersey. Electronic versions can be found on the EPA project Web site (www.epa.gov/udson). Copies are also available

in print and on CD-ROM by calling the Hudson River Field Office. The public can submit comments in writing via hard copy and email. All comments should be sent to:



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For More Information

Visit, call, or write to the Hudson River Field Office at the address below or log on to www.epa.gov/udson.

EPA Contacts



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EPA Regional Public Liaison

EPA Region 2 has designated a public liaison as a point-of-contact for community concerns and questions about the federal Superfund program in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. To support this effort, the Agency has established a 24-hour, toll-free number that the public can call to request information, express concerns, or register complaints about Superfund. The public liaison for EPA's Region 2 office is: George H. Zachos, U.S. EPA, Region 2, 2890 Woodbridge Avenue MS-211, Edison, New Jersey 08837, (732) 321-6621, Toll-free (888) 283-7626.